

# OLD MAN GREENLAW STIRS UP TROUBLE

By a Clear Elucidation of the Proper Meaning of Certain Words.

## MR. PEPPER IN THE DISCARD

But the Others Wrangle Over a Purely Hypothetical Question.

By DAVID A. CURTIS.

"Some're in the Good Book," said old man Greenlaw. "It says how if a lady hesitates she's liable to get lost. Mebbe it's so. I dunno 'xactly whether 'tis or not, but I'm doggoned if I c'n see why 'tis the hull human race ain't 'cluded."

"Pears like it holds good with men too. If a man don't put up when it's his play, stands to reason he ain't got no mo' chance of rakin' the pot 'n if he wa'n't settin' in."

"Stands to reason what it's got to be thataway. If the others what's into the game was to have to wait indefinite for him to play they wouldn't be no playin' did. O' co'se a man 'd ought to be to 'lowed a reasonable time to make up his mind, case of a question whether he'd ought to call, an' that's allays did. But that ain't hesitin'."

"Hesitin' is waitin' a unreasonable time, an' th' ain't nobody gwine to put up with that, not into no poker game, he ain't. Proves how the hull problem of livin' is founded onto the game of poker. If a man understands poker an' plays it right when he does play, he c'n be relied onto to live erect. But if he don't, he ain't an' he won't."

"That's what 'pears to be the main pint 'bout this here question of hesitin' th' ain't nobody, man nor woman, to be 'hesitin' 'bout 'long o' takin' a proper amount of time in 'diddin' what he's gwine to do. If he don't he's periclitate, an' him that plays periclitate is also liable to lose the pot."

"Oh, I don't know," said Mr. Owen Pepper. "Way yo' all tells it, 'pears like a man 'd be atween the devil an' the deep blue sea the hull time."

"First off, I ain't never heard of nobody never callin' no time limit onto a man what was 'hesitin' whether to call or not. 'Cordin' to what I've allays understood, he's 'titled to take all the time he damn well likes to do 'dide what he's gwine to do into a game, 'nearly disregardless of what anybody else 'considers right."

"Mebbe it might be called hesitin', but it's gently reckoned good poker, an' 'pears like it's a heap mo' likely to be lost if a man don't stop to think, 'n 'tis 't'her way round."

"An' then there remarks yo' all was makin' 'bout bein' periclitate 'pears to be open to question. Way yo' all talks a man what plays periclitate is liable to lose, but 'cordin' to my observation the mo' suddint a man plays the mo' liable he's liable to win out. 'Pears like 't'her folks's liable to get 't'her 'fined."

It was not often that Mr. Pepper was allowed to say so much as this at one time. His speech was almost always pungent, and old man Greenlaw and his friends were not particularly tolerant, wherefore Mr. Pepper usually found it necessary to show himself expeditious in his movements in order to avoid being thrown off the premises.

On this occasion, however, his hearers appeared to be more or less impressed, not merely by his presumption in calling the old man's dictum in question but also by the cogency of his argument. They were all deeply interested in the game of poker and were anxious always to gain such wisdom as might serve to increase their own efficiency. Therefore they listened.

Old man Greenlaw, it is true, was at first somewhat inclined toward indignation at being so flouted, but gradually he assumed an expression of benignant superiority, and even smiled indulgently as he made reply.

"Trouble with yo' all, Pepper," he said as one offering fairly counsel, "is how yo' don't 'hear to have no conception of the right use of words."

"Yo' c'n make a noise with 'em all right, same's anybody kin, but that's nigh about as far 's yo' c'n go. But different words has different meanin's, an' some on 'em has mo' 'n one. If somebody had took the pains to 'plain to yo' all what them meanin's was when yo' all mebbe yo' all 'been able to use 'em mo' capable like."

"Way 'tis now yo' c'n perduce the noise all right an' sometimes yo' string 'em together so 's 't'hey sound like they meant somethin' even if they can't nobody tell what 'tis. But mostly they is like what the Good Book says, 'Full o' sound an' fury, not signifyin' nothin'.' Th' ain't no sense in that."

"This 'ere 'pears like yo' all is consid'able mixed up 'bout three or fo' of the most 'mportant words 'tis."

"First off yo' 'pears to be twisted 'bout 'periclitate' an' 'suddint.' They is consid'able 'dvantage in bein' suddint when the 'casion calls fo' quick action. But th' ain't never nothin' in bein' periclitate."

garded his exit with complacent amusement and continued to smoke placidly but industriously for a considerable time in silence. It presently appeared, however, that their thoughts were still engrossed by the subject which the old man had endeavored to elucidate.

"I reckon," said Jake Winterbottom rather ponderously after the silence had continued for some time, "what they is 'consid'able mo' what might be said 'bout that there time limit what Pepper was talkin' 'bout. I ain't never heard of nobody takin' a week fo' to make up his mind whether he'd call a bet into a poker game, but I don't see no reason why he shouldn't be let to do it if he sees fit. Th' ain't nothin' in th' rules ag'in it, 's fur 's I know."

"That's what the lawyers call the 'reductio ad absurdum,' said the old man promptly. "O' co'se th' ain't nothin' in the rules ag'in it."

"Th' ain't nothin' in the rules ag'in it," said a girl or chuckle, "but while the cyarars is bein' dealt, but 'tain't to be 'spected how they ain't nobody gwine to do neither one on 'em, not if he's lookin' to set in fo' the remainder of the game he ain't. All 'd depends on what's to be 'consid'ed reasonable. 'Poker is got to be played reasonable. It's got to be played at all, same's 'anythin' else."

"Mebbe that's so," said Jim Blaisdell a little doubtfully, "but who's gwine to tell what's reasonable an' what ain't into a poker game? O' co'se if a thing's agreed onto when yo' set in, that goes. Don't make no difference what 'tis, nor it don't make no difference whether it's reasonable or not."

"But if they ain't nothin' specified when yo' set in th' ain't nothin' goes only what's in the rules reglar. I ain't never took a week my own self 'diddin' whether I'd play or not, but if I was to 'reckon what a week was 'necess'ry I'd be some liable to take it."

"Not if I was settin' in yo' wouldn't," exclaimed Joe Bassett with strong emphasis.

Mr. Bassett seldom joined in any discussion while it was being carried on verbally, and this sudden assertion on his part was not only surprising to the others but a little disconcerting as well. He was known to be positive in his convictions and more or less strenuous in the unfolding of them, and it was evident that the argument if it was to be continued, would progress on somewhat different lines.

"Is that so?" retorted Blaisdell. "I ain't a-sayin' how I'm liable to, bein' 's I c'n keenly make up my mind in less time 'n that what I'm gwine to do. But th' ain't nobody gwine to bulldoze me into playin' afo' I'm ready, 'd it takes two weeks."

"Mebbe they is them what c'n be bulldozed, but if they is anybody gwine to try it onto me I'd like to know how it's gwine to be did." He glared defiantly at Bassett as he spoke, and knowing the latter as they all did it seemed likely that strained relations between the two would result. Sam Bassett, however, spoke up suddenly.

"Mebbe it might be did th'oughtful 'diddin', he said, quietly but earnestly.

"As how?" demanded Blaisdell angrily.

"Well," said Bassett, deliberately and calmly, "I ain't a-sayin' what Bassett might do, but I c'n tell what I'd be liable to do, 'long about fo' or five hours after I done made a bet, if they wa'n't nobody done made up his mind what he's gwine to do 'bout callin'."

"What 'd yo' all reckon yo' was liable to do?" asked Blaisdell, with an open sneer.

"If I done made a bet," replied Bassett steadily, "an' they wa'n't nobody called, I sho' would reckon the pot was mine. I say the old man is right. 'Tain't reasonable fo' a man to put up his money an' set an' grow old fo' his time, while he waits fo' somebody to do what he'd best do. O' co'se, he's 'titled to study a spell, but 'tain't to be 'spected what I'm gwine to wait no week. I'd take the pot."

"Not 'nless 'twas over my daid body, they wouldn't nobody rake it, if 'twas me what was studyin'!" declared Winterbottom, and the two glared murderously at each other.

"Well," said Bassett, "if they was a daid body in the way, I reckon it'd have to be 't'her way, no matter what 'twas. If the pot was mine, I'd have it, an' I sho' would reckon it was mine, under them circumstances."

"They couldn't nobody holt nothin' ag'in yo' all, nor nobody else, fo' takin' what was yo' all," interjected the old man, butting in with the benevolent purpose of avoiding the general melee that seemed imminent, "but the pint is how soon it's yo' all. They ain't no hard an' fast rule 'bout nothin' of a situation 's fur 's I know, but on the other hand, th' ain't no question but what a man has a right fo' to study his play fo' a reasonable time. Question is, what's reasonable."

"Reasonable be doggoned," shouted Blaisdell, who was beginning to show temper unusually at having his opinion on a question of poker controverted. "Th' ain't no man livin' no matter how long how long I can't take fo' to make a play when I ain't ready."

"No, nor they ain't no man livin' gwine to keep me waitin' fo' a week after I done put up my money," declared Bassett, no less wrathfully.

**POEMS WORTH READING.**

An Angel Disguised.  
Her voice is like a rattle coil chute rumble.  
Her smile, a ragged rip;  
Her walk is half a shuffle.  
Her touch, a gnarly grip.

Yet dogs and little children follow after  
As she goes down the street;  
They feel God's love in her discordant laughter.  
They know her soul is sweet.

G. T. Evans.

**The Feminist Alphabet.**  
Compiled by an agnostic.  
A is for ANTI—the allies of sin.  
Who encourage Suffragette with horrible din.  
B is for BALLOT—the sceptre which rules,  
Not granted to Women, ex-convicts or fools.  
C is for CHILD LABOR (let plutocrats groan).  
How long would it last if Mothers could vote?

D is for DUTY men owe to their Wives.  
To give them the Vote—then repent all their lives.  
E is for EQUALITY—sought at the polls  
By feminine creatures with masculine souls.  
F is for FRANCHISE—'tis plain to be seen  
They're for it. God bless 'em, by nineteen teen steen steen.

G is for GIRLS—whenver they start  
They'll vote with their head—but more with their heart.  
H is for HUSBAND with resolute faw.  
Who, when you have children, is required by law.

I is for INFANT—sleep in her crib.  
Deprived of a vote through descent from a rib.  
J is for JUSTICE which Women pursue.  
They obey all the laws—why not make just a few?

K is for KIBBISTONE—where humble men  
And watch suffrage pageants keep step to the band.  
L is for LADIES—chock full of hard knocks  
For the masculine voter, while darning his socks.

M is for MANICULES—letters which years  
Have forged on the wrists of the Women, poor dears!  
N is for NATIONS—learning at last  
That shy, shrinking Woman's a thing of the Past.

O is for OAK—once for clinging vines suited,  
But strong grew the vine, so the tree's been uprooted.  
P is for PAPA—once head of the house.  
But since Mother voted as meek as a mouse.

Q is for QUIBBLE—dare any man state  
That suffrage does it when pressed in debate?  
R is for REVERENCE which decent men  
To his charming and arduous suffrage foe.

S is for SEX—which being made double  
Is really the misapprehension of all of this trouble.  
T is for TAXES which Women must pay.  
Concerning their uses she's nothing to say.

U is for UNION—for thine hand in hand.  
Queen Man and King Woman united should stand.  
V is for VOTING—what feminine bliss  
Except perhaps flirting, is greater than this!

W is for WOMAN—the Mother of men.  
But without any fathers, Mrs. Woman, what then?  
X is for XANTHIPPE—quite sure, as you know,  
Did she too vote for suffrage, so long, long ago?

Y is for YORE—such as dumb cattle wear.  
Let him who'd grind Woman to earth have a care!  
Z is for ZENITH (no more "donta" and "dants")  
When Woman will stalk through the World wearing "pants!"

**Latent.**  
Kate Putnam, *Opinion in Lippincott's Magazine*.  
Without the garden wall, it grows.  
Wrung by the restless blast that flows  
Across the sea.

Forgotten the fabled spring,  
The scanty leaves drooping, withering;  
Source would it seem, poor, sapless thing!  
Yet must the frail and faded spray  
Still reach the sea.

Three Hips on Ananias.  
*Grandland Live in Collier's*.  
A group of golfers sat one day  
Around the nineteenth hole,  
Exchanging lies and alibis,  
And telling the flowery tale.

"Let's give a cup," said one of them.  
A spark in his eye.  
"For him among us who can tell  
The most outrageous lie."

"Agreed," they cried, and one by one  
They played 'er under par.  
While yards of putts and brassie shots  
That travelled true and far.  
With stories of prodigious swipes,  
Of holes in one, and of  
Of niblick shots from yawning traps  
As Vardon might have done.

And then they noticed, sitting by,  
A stranger who had yet to join  
The fabulating fest.  
"Get in the game," they said to him.  
"Get in and shoot your bit!"  
When the stranger, slow and spoke  
As follows, of his wit.

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.**

John Paul Jones and the "Don't Tread On Me" flag seen as hard to down as "Banquo's Ghost," and it is still a mooted question as to who first raised the flag and whether or not it was of the kind above quoted.

On page 29 of the "Life of Rear Admiral John Paul Jones" compiled from his original journals and correspondence," published by J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia, 1875, Dr. Syntax will find the following:

"On board of that ship before Philadelphia, Mr. Jones hoisted the flag of America with his own hands, the first time it was ever displayed."

The ship referred to was the *Alfred*, to which he was commissioned as "first of the First Lieutenants" which placed him next in command to Capt. Saltonstall, Whipple, Hiddle and Hopkins. His commission bears date the 7th day of December, 1775.

In the appendix of this life of John Paul Jones will also be found the following interesting correspondence between Adams and Langdon bearing upon the question in point:

WILLIAM S. EASTBROOKS.  
"QUINCY, JAN. 24, 1813.

"DEAR SIR: I feel an irresistible propensity to compare notes with you in order to ascertain whether your memory and mine coincide in the recollection of the circumstances of a particular transaction in the history of this country. As it lies in my mind Capt. John Manly applied to Gen. Washington in Cambridge in 1775, informed him that British transports and merchant ships were frequently passing and repassing unarmed and asked leave to put a few guns aboard a vessel to cruise for them. Washington, either shrinking from the boldness of the enterprise or doubting his authority, prudently transmitted the information to Congress in a letter. When the letter was read many members seemed much surprised, but a motion was made and seconded to commit it to a special committee. Opposition was made to this motion and a debate ensued, but the motion prevailed by a small majority. The committee appointed were John Adams, Richard Henry Lee, John Hancock, and me to purchase, arm and equip, officer and man ships. We met every night and in a short time had the *Alfred*, *Columbus*, *Cabot*, *Andrew Doria*, *Providence*, and *John Adams* ready upon this report, but the resolution was carried by a small majority. Under the authority of this resolution Washington fitted out Manly, who soon brought in eleven prizes, the most important of which was that transport loaded with soldiers, arms, ammunition and that immortal mortar which was called the Congress, and finally drove the British army out of Boston and their fleet from the harbor. This splendid success inspired new courage into Congress. They appointed a new committee consisting of myself, Gov. Hopkins, Richard Henry Lee, Mr. Gadsden and me to purchase, arm and equip, officer and man ships. 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